Policy guidelines for National Water Policy

154. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the views of the various States received on the draft National Water Policy were considered in the recent meeting of the working group set up under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Water Resources;

(b) if so, the details of the deliberations and decisions taken by the working group;

(c) whether the draft National Water Policy is likely to be revised in the light of the recommendations of the working group; and

(d) by when the National Policy Guidelines for water allocation is likely to be put in place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) Two meetings of the Working Group of the National Water Resources Council (NWRC) were held on 22nd May, 2001 and 24th September, 2001 under the Chairmanship of Minister of Water Resources wherein the views of the various States on the draft National Water Policy were considered. The provisions regarding setting up of river Basin organizations, water allocation amongst the States, ecological needs of the rivers *inter alia* were discussed. Keeping in view these deliberations, certain modifications have been carried out in the proposed draft policy. In the last (second) meeting of the Working Group, the members, after detailed discussions, arrived at a near consensus on the draft National Water Policy which has been recommended for adoption by the National Water Resources Council. The draft National Water Policy will be considered by the National Water Resources Council in its next meeting to be held shortly for its adoption.

(d) In so far as the draft National Policy Guidelines for Water Allocation amongst the States are concerned, the Working Group

has recommended for referring them to the National Water Board of NWRC for having a re-look and arriving at a consensus.

Districts affected by ground water contamination

155. PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts which are affected by ground water contamination like arsenic and fluorosis, State-wise; and

(b) the total amount of money earmarked for containing the menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) A statement indicating names of States and Districts where ground water has been found contaminated with arsenic and fluoride is enclosed. (*See* below)

(b) The provision of drinking water supply is the responsibility of the State Governments. Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments and provides financial assistance under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY). Under ARWSP, upto 20% of the allotted funds can be utilised to tackle water quality problems. In such quality affected areas, where ground water is unfit for drinking, the safe drinking water is supplied either through alternative sources, tapping surface water or treatment of quality problems through suitable removal unit. In urban areas, the Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation assists the States for the provisions of safe drinking water.

The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) also provides technical services to the State Governments. The CGWB undertakes periodic monitoring of water quality. The data thus collected is made available to concerned State agencies. The Board has sanctioned funds amounting to Rs. 59.78 lakh to the Government of West Bengal to study arsenic contamination in ground water in the State.